

pope or priest, or even kaiser or diet, to dictate to me what I shall believe, in defiance of the convictions of my inmost soul ? Is not God superior to pope or kaiser, the eternal to the vain show of human power, whether begotten of priestcraft or statecraft ? This is the question that Luther answers with a sublime simplicity as he faces the pomp and splendour of the assembled Diet. " Here I stand, I can do no other; God help me!" are words of gold in the history of liberty. In them the tyranny of priestly tradition received a mortal stroke. Hus had indeed spoken as inflexibly in defence of conscience, but tradition proved too strong for Hus. The champion became the martyr of liberty. To Luther another destiny was reserved, and great things for the world depended on this reservation.

This bellicose spirit in defiance of the pope was after the heart of a man like Ulrich von Hutten, next to Luther the most militant spirit of the age in the battle for emancipation from Rome. Strangely different from, yet in some points analogous to, that of Luther had been the life of this knightly protagonist of the political ideal of humanism in Germany. Unlike Luther, he belonged to the order of the lesser nobility, had been destined by his father for the Church. He had been educated in the monastery of Fulda, but the cloister life had no fascination for him as it had for Luther, and in 1505, at the age of seventeen, he fled out into the world, to live for several years the life of a vagabond as wandering student and poet. " There is nowhere," he said, " I like to live so well as everywhere." Sometimes he was reduced to beg, and sleep under the skies; sometimes he would enjoy for a brief season a spell of good things under the protection of some kindly patron. He, too, like Luther, visited Italy (in 1512), and wrote epigrams against Pope Julius II. He repeated the visit four years later (1516), and spent on this occasion several months in Rome. To him, as to Luther, this Roman sojourn was a revelation. " You may live for plunder, commit murder and sacrilege, break the laws as you will; your talk may be shameful, your actions criminal; you may revel in lust and deny God in heaven—but if you do but bring money to Rome, you are a most respectable person." He tried the study of law as a means of gaining a post that would keep him from